

Ex-NUJ president Hata Wahari joins DAP
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Former National Union of Journalists (NUJ) president Mohd Hata Wahari is the latest Malay to join the DAP.

Party secretary-general Lim Guan Eng, in welcoming Hata, said he hopes that the former NUJ president will continue his fight for freedom of the press.

Lim said he is elated with Hata's willingness to join the party.

"I believe he can contribute to the party and fight for freedom of expression and freedom of the press as he had done while in the union and the media," he said.

Hata, who hails from the Umno bastion Johor, said he has brought additional forms home and would like his family members including his parents to join DAP.

The 43-year-old former NUJ president said DAP is always criticised and had been defamed as a racist party.

azlan "I feel that the DAP is a suitable party for me to fight for the cause of the rights of every Malaysian. I hope that my participation in the DAP could correct the misconception painted by the mainstream media, especially Utusan Malaysia," he said.

"I also view the DAP as a party where its members are given leeway and freedom without much obstacles. We are able to fight for a better Malaysia. That has been my aim, to see a better Malaysia, with better accountability in leadership."

Hata said that as a former journalist working with Utusan Malaysia, he sees the paper branding the DAP as racist as merely a political ploy to create a negative image of the party.

He said he had done some research before deciding to join the DAP today.

"All I want is to continue fighting for justice," he said.

No guarantee of a post yet

Asked whether Hata will hold any specific post in the party, Lim said Hata joined the party on principle and out of sincerity.

"He has joined the party with an open heart. Let us rejoice in his decision to join DAP first. If there is any decision made, it would be announced later.

"What is important is that he is fighting for freedom of the press, freedom of expression and freedom of information. We in DAP welcome the stand as it is within the principles of the party," he said.

Hata hopes to woo more Malays, especially from Johor, to join the DAP.

Asked whether he will contest in the next general election, he said he left it to the party.

"I want to garner more support for Pakatan Rakyat and particularly the DAP. I have told (national publicity secretary) Tony Pua that I will be focusing in Johor, my home state, and I will pull my family members to

join the DAP," he said, adding he has 11 siblings in addition to his parents.

"DAP can achieve the support of the Malays despite the slanders done by the mainstream media like Utusan. This is something which I have to explain to them, that the party is highly principled, like the Penang government," he said.

Hata said he will do all he can to gain Malay support to DAP.

Recently, former Pulau Manis assemblyperson Mohd Ariff Sabri Abdul Aziz and veteran Negri Sembilan Umno member Aspan Alias had joined the DAP.

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